

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 061313Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7585

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 11569

FOLLOWING REPEAT CALCUTTA 1910 SENT ACTION NEW DELHI

INFO BOMBAY/MADRAS 05 AUG 76.

QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L CALCUTTA 1910

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJ: CPM SETS A NEW COURSE

1. FROM WHAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GATHER FROM A VARIETY OF COURCES AND THE PRESS, THE CPM CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING IN CALCUTTA JULY 15-24 SEEMS TO HAVE SET A NEW COURSE FOR THE PARTY. AS WE HAVE REPORTED IN NUMEROUS EARLIER MESSAGES, THE CPM HAS DURING THIS PAST YEAR SINCE THE PROCLAMATION OF THE EMERGENCY BEEN TORN BETWEEN VARIOUS FACTIONS ADVOCATING POLICIES AS DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED AS COLLABORATION WITH THE GOI OR AT THE OTHER EXTREME UNDERGROUND VIOLENT OPPOSITION. IN WEST BENGAL AT LEAST, THE CPM HAS TOSSED ABOUT ALMOST RUDDERLESS WHILE FACTION LEADERS FOUGHT OVER THESE AND OTHER ISSUES. THIS IN-FIGHTING HAS COST THE PARTY DEARLY IN STRENGTH. DEFLECTIONS AND EXPULSIONS HAVE BECOME COMMONPLACE AND ALL OBSERVERS AGREE THAT THE CPM HAS SUFFERED A SERIOUS DECLINE IN MEMBERSHIP IN EASTERN INDIA.

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2. WHILE THE JULY 15-24 CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING BY NO MEANS

SETTLED ALL OF THE PARTY'S POLICY DISPUTES OR PUT AN END TO PERSONAL RIVALRIES AND SQUABBLING, IT DOES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN BRINGING THE LEADERSHIP INTO AGREEMENT ON MAIN ISSUES. THE CC ESSENTIALLY ADOPTED A MIDDLE OF THE ROAD COURSE BETWEEN THE TWO EXTREMES ADVOCATED BY VARIOUS FACTIONS. ON THE ONE HAND, THE CC DECLARED THE CPM OPPOSED TO COOPERATION WITH THE GOI, THE CONGRESS PARTY, THE CPI OR ANY OTHER "NON-LEFT" PARTY. IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE PARTY WOULD CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE SWARAN SINGH COMMITTEE'S PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS (MEANING THAT IT WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY MEETINGS THEREON CALLED BY THE GOI OR CONGRESS) AND IN FAVOR OF THE RESTORATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS, AND THAT NO NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE HELD WITH THE CPI. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE CC REJECTED PROPOSALS MADE BY THE RADICAL WING, HEADED BY PROMODE DAS GUPTA, FOR THE SETTING UP OF AN UNDERGROUND ORGANIZATION.

3. THE JULY 15-24 CC MEETING ALSO APPEARS TO HAVE SET A NEW COURSE IN REGARD TO THE PARTY'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE MAJOR COMMUNIST POWERS. IN THE CC DELIBERATIONS THERE WAS MUCH CRITICISM OF BOTH THE USSR AND CHINA AND GENERAL APPROVAL OF THE INDEPENDENT LINE TAKEN RECENTLY BY EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES, THOUGH THERE WERE SOME EXPRESSIONS OF DISMAY OVER THE REPORTED REJECTION BY EUROPEAN PARTIES OF THE IDEA OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT, IN WHICH THE CC REAFFIRMED ITS FAITH. OF COURSE, THE CPM HAS FOR SOME TIME BEEN MOVING AWAY FROM THE CHINESE (IN A BRIEF CONVERSATION SOME MONTHS AGO JYOTI BASU REMARKED TO ME THAT THE CHINESE ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT PEOPLE ON EARTH). THE PARTY IS SAID RECENTLY TO HAVE BEEN PUTTING OUT FEELERS TO THE SOVIETS, BUT OUR SOURCES SAY THE SOVIETS REFUSED TO ABANDON THEIR SUPPORT OF THE CPI OR MRS. GANDHI AND SO THESE CONTACTS CAME TO NOTHING. MOREOVER, WE ARE TOLD THAT THE CPM HAS NOW VIRTUALLY CUT ITS TIES WITH COMMUNIST PARTIES OF NORTH VIETNAM AND NORTH KOREA (OR POSSIBLY IT IS THE OTHER WAY AROUND) BECAUSE OF THEIR SUPPORT FOR MRS. GANDHI AND THE CPI.

4. IT IS TOO EARLY TO SAY THAT THE CPM HAS DRAWN ITSELF TOGETHER AND THAT ITS CRISIS OF THE LAST YEAR IS NOW PAST. BUT IT DOES APPEAR THAT THE JULY 15-24 CC MEETING WITNESSED A SERIOUS EFFORT TO PUT THE PARTY'S HOUSE IN ORDER AND REVERSE
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THE DECLINE IN ITS FORTUNES OF THE PAST YEAR. THE TEST WILL BE WHETHER THE MAJOR FACTIONS, LED RESPECTIVELY BY DAS GUPTA AND RANADIVE, SUNDARAYYA, AND JOYTI BASU, EMS NAMBOODIRIPED, AND RAMAMURTHI WILL NOW WORK TOGETHER EFFECTIVELY. WE ARE TOLD THAT CPM LEADERS THINK THE GENERAL ECONOMIC STAGNATION AND RISING UNEMPLOYMENT (IN WEST BENGAL AT LEAST) OFFER THE RIGHT CONDITIONS FOR A RENEWAL OF THE CPM'S MASS FOLLOWING, AND THAT THEY HAVE HOPES THAT THE PARTY MAY REEMERGE AS A

REAL THREAT TO CONGRESS IN EASTERN INDIA.

5. A RESURGENCE OF THIS MAGNITUDE SEEMS UNLIKELY IN THE NEAR FUTURE, IF EVER. OF MORE IMMEDIATE INTEREST IS THE ATTITUDE THAT THE AUTHORITIES WILL TAKE TOWARD THE CPM NOW THAT IT (ASSUMING THAT THE NEW LINE IS FIRM) HAS DECIDED AGAINST ANY COOPERATION WITH THE GOI OR CONGRESS AND THE CPI. THE ESTABLISHMENT PRESS HAS TRIED TO PORTRAY THE JULY 15-24 CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING AS AN EVENT OF NO IMPORTANCE, BUT THE CPM HAS CONTINUED TO GET MORE PUBLICITY IN THE CALCUTTA PRESS FOR ITS VIEWS THAN ANY OTHER OPPOSITION PARTY, AS THOUGH THE GOI AND GOWB STILL HELD OUT HOPE FOR SOME SORT OF COLLABORATION ON ITS PART. CPI DAILY KALANTAR, HOWEVER, HAS IN RECENT DAYS BEEN BLASTING AWAY HARDER THAN EVER AT THE CPM, GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT THE CPI VIEWS THE NEW COURSE SET BY THE CPM AS A DEFINITE THREAT TO ITS LEFT.

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UNQUOTE.

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